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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7021
INFO RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 6560
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RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 0908
RUEAHLH/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHDC
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SUBJECT: CSI VISIT FIRMS UP TURKISH SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM

REF: ANKARA 3464

11. Summary: Representatives from DHS, DOE, USCG and post visited Izmir June 14-16 to assess the port's suitability for participation in the DHS Container Security Initiative (CSI).

The two-day visit included meetings with Turkish officials from Customs, Foreign Trade, the Coast Guard, the Maritime Authority, the Railroads Authority (who currently is responsible for port operations), and the Izmir Exporters Association and a tour of the port on one of its busiest days of the week. CSI's willingness to go forward with the assessment succeeded in increasing Turkish support for the program. End summary.

12. In what was categorized by CSI officials as a well-organized event, Turkish and USG officials met June 14-16 in Izmir to discuss the CSI program and to conduct DHS's assessment of the port, one of the necessary requirements for implementing CSI in Turkey. DHS, DOE, USCG and embassy representatives met with a Turkish delegation, led by Atilla Bastirmaci, Head of America's Department at the GOT Foreign Trade Undersecretariat (FTU), that included officials from Turkish Customs, Coast Guard, Maritime Authority, Railroads Authority (who currently hold responsibility for port operations), and the Izmir Exporters Association.

13. The meetings provided an excellent opportunity for the two sides to discuss in detail the program and its implementation process in Turkey. Turkish officials were able to express their concerns and expectations about starting the program and stationing personnel in Izmir as well as to clarify information and procedures. One of the most positive outcomes of the visit was the support for the program gleaned from the exporters in Izmir after they were able to directly question CSI officials about the program and its potential effects on their business. At a subsequent meeting in Izmir, representatives from the exporters association told us that they are very enthusiastic about the program. We encouraged them to communicate this support to Turkish government officials.

14. Comment: The CSI team's visit increased Turkish support for the program and renewed the enthusiasm of those in the Turkish government who have supported it from the beginning. We will turn our efforts now to working on a final CSI agreement document that will meet the needs of the parties involved. End comment.

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